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PM, wife join 12,000 at State dinner

MALACCA, Sat. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali joined about 12,000 people at a State dinner in Ayer Keroh tonight, held in honour of the participants of the 18th Piala Perdana badminton tournament which ended today.

Also present were Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and wife Datuk Seri Endon Mahmood, Chief Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Ali Rustam, Menteri Besar and Cabinet Ministers.

Later, Dr Mahathir and Dr Siti Hasmah were called on stage to cut a cake in celebration of their 47th wedding anniversary which fell on Aug 6.

Dr Mahathir, in his appreciation speech, said in jest that he got married almost at the same time as the country gained its independence.

"The country gained its independence but I lost mine. However, I don't have any regrets. I am thankful. However, I never thought of sending an SMS (short message service) to my wife on the anniversary day."

Dr Mahathir and wife then rendered a Malay classic entitled Dari Hati ke Hati, to thunderous applause.

Their efforts helped raise an additional RM100,000 for the Association of Wives of Ministers and Deputy Ministers (Bakti) fund donated by Talam Corporation Bhd.

Earlier, donors gave RM1 million, of which RM700,000 went to Bakti and the rest to Association of Wives of Malacca Assemblymen (Bistari).

A fireworks display was later held outside the Malacca International Trade Centre in Ayer Keroh.